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ABSTRACT

Project Horizontes is a culturally grounded English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) retention project developed for Latino students enrolled at the Metropolitan Campus of Cuyahoga Community College in Cleveland, Ohio. The theoretical assumption underlying the design of the project is that bilingualism should be treated as an expansion of expressive capabilities rather than a barrier. If strengths in both languages and cultures are respected and further developed, functioning should significantly improve as reflected in grades and language tests, retention should be markedly improved within and across quarters, and positive assimilation will be expedited. The initial project design featured two concurrent courses, a standard intermediate ESL grammar course taught in English, with some limited reinforcement in Spanish, and a team taught ESL course featuring Latino cultural awareness taught in Spanish, English writing with reinforcing concepts in Spanish, and a college survival skills component in English. In addition, the program included support groups; faculty mentorship; and supplemental social activities, lectures, and luncheon forums. After implementation in fall 1992 and winter 1993, an overall quarter completion rate of 89% was achieved and persistence was high compared to anecdotal accounts of prior cohorts. In addition, 80.7% of students had a 90% or better attendance rate, English language test scores showed a 33% increase, and participant attitudes remained positive throughout the program. (Contains 19 references and a winter 1993 syllabus.) (Author/KP)

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CUYAHOGA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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Cleveland, Ohio

JC 950 013

Horizontes:

**A Culturally Grounded E.S.L. College Entry Project for
Latino Students**

Fall '92, Winter '93 Pilot Phase

Abstract

Project Horizontes is a culturally grounded English as a Second Language (ESL) retention project developed for Latino students enrolled at the Metropolitan Campus of Cuyahoga Community College, in Cleveland, Ohio. The project was developed against a backdrop of low quarter and degree completion rates on the part of Latino students.

Theoretical Basis:

The theoretical assumption underlying the design of the project was that bilingualism needs to be treated as an expansion of expressive capabilities rather than as a barrier. Strengths in both languages and cultures need to be respected and further developed. It was anticipated that a design following these lines would reinforce self-concept. Participants would feel they were being treated with respect and appreciate the extra support. Functioning would significantly improve as reflected in grades and language tests. Retention would be markedly improved, both within and across quarters. And "positive assimilation," understood as a dynamic process rooted in students' unique historical processes and cultures, would be expedited.

Project Design:

Initial project design featured two courses, taught concurrently; support groups; faculty mentorship; and supplemental social activities, lectures, and luncheon forums. The two courses were a standard intermediate ESL grammar course taught in English, with some limited reinforcement in Spanish (student composition 50% Latino); and a team taught ESL course featuring: a) Latino cultural awareness, taught primarily in Spanish, b) the writing of English, taught in English with reinforcing concepts in Spanish, and c) a college survival skills component taught solely in English (student composition 100% Latino).

Pilot Phase Assessment Findings:

Objectives of the project were realized. Overall, an 89% quarter completion rate was achieved as against the 70 % goal.. College persistence was high as compared with anecdotal accounts of prior cohorts. Attendance overall was 80.7% of students at 90% or better attendance. The grade point average was within the C to A range targeted for the project. Significantly, English language test scores showed a 33% increase. Finally, attitudes of participants remained positive throughout the program. Several suggestions for improvement were generated and many have subsequently been implemented.

I. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Hispanic Americans are the fastest growing ethnic minority and speakers of the second most prevalent language in this country. According to the 1990 U.S. Census, 139,696 of the 22 million Hispanics counted in the United States were residing in Ohio. The State's Latino population was younger than any other group -- 37.6 percent were under 18 years old. Nearly 74 percent of Ohio Latinos (97,600) were concentrated in the 21 northern counties of the State. Cuyahoga County had the largest concentration of Hispanics (31,447) with Puerto Ricans as the largest Latino sub-group. Between 1980 and 1990 the Latino population of the city of Cleveland alone experienced an impressive 30.5 percent growth, while the city's white population decreased by 18.5 percent and the African American population decreased by 6.3 percent.

Nationally, in 1990, Hispanic Americans were 9 percent of the U.S. population while representing only 5.6 percent of higher education enrollment.¹ This situation is showing some improvement. Since 1987, the number of Latinos receiving an Associate degree has risen by 16 percent nationwide.

Between 1980 and 1990 the number of Latinos enrolled in Ohio's two-year post-secondary institutions grew by 61.8% (from 1,069 students in 1980 to 1,773 students in 1990), representing 1.1 percent of the total Ohio enrollment for two-year institutions.² Despite these improvements, Ohio Latinos remain underrepresented at the State's two-year institutions.

Of particular concern is the very low rate of degree completion achieved by Latinos. In point of fact, Hispanic American students are dropping out of school at alarming rates. Thirty-five percent of all 16-to-24-year-old Latinos in the U.S.A. were classified as high school dropouts in 1991.³ They are among the non-native English speaking students who, generally, have historically been dropping out of school at rates three to four times higher than native English speakers (Kyle, 1984).

Latino students attending the Cleveland City School District follow national Latino dropout trends. A study using the cohort method to calculate the district's dropout rate (Cataldo, 1990) reported that 34.5% of all Latinos (and 26.1% of all African Americans) enrolled in the 9th grade in 1984 dropped out before graduation. Socioeconomic

¹ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. 1993. Trends in Enrollment in Higher Education by Racial/Ethnic Category: Fall 1982 Through Fall 1991.

² Carter, Deborah & Reginald Wilson. 1993. Minorities in Higher Education (Table 19, page 68). American Council on Education: Washington DC.

³ U.S. Department of Education. 1992. Digest of Education Statistics, 1992. Washington DC: National Center for Educational Statistics.

barriers must also be considered. Nationally, 37.7 percent of Hispanic children live in poverty while in the city of Cleveland the percentage rises to 47.4 percent. Many of these children may be at risk of school failure. Without adequate intervention and support, many will not be prepared for college. Reported high dropout rates and low socioeconomic status continue to drastically decimate the pool of candidates for post-secondary education in the city of Cleveland and in the county of Cuyahoga.

More than 500 Latino students were enrolled in Cuyahoga Community College in 1992. Historically, a very small percentage of all the Latino students enrolled graduate in two years, transfer to other post-secondary institutions, or remain enrolled at Cuyahoga Community College. It is against this background that the Horizontes Project was conceived.

Review of the Literature

Culture has been broadly used to explain the poor performance of Hispanics in school as well as their low visibility in other institutions. According to the prevailing stereotype, Hispanics are perceived to be non-competitive, non future oriented, and family centered. These attributes are commonly seen as all but insuring poor performance in school (Bean & Tienda, 1987). While the reality of cultural differences cannot be denied, a more perceptive interpretation of the impact these factors have in the academic life of Hispanic students is needed. Special attention must be given to the cultural conflict Hispanic students experience as they are forced to become bicultural with respect to learning processes, communication styles, and human relations in general.

Schools rarely accommodate this duality. As agents of socialization, specifically Americanization, schools and colleges have been the explicit site for cultural homogenization and dilution of ethnic identity. Cultural denigration, when it occurs and is internalized by Hispanic students, translates into low self-esteem and further contributes to low achievement (Bean & Tienda, 1987). Moreover, the Latino student body is a very heterogenous group. Simplistic generalizations must be avoided. In Cleveland's case, Puerto Rican students constitute a distinct population deserving of special attention.

First, under Spanish and later under the American rule, Puerto Rico has never been an independent nation. Bird (1982) has illustrated how individual self-definition, self-esteem, and ethnic identity have been negatively affected by the colonial experience. In addition, Puerto Ricans are the first group to come to the mainland in large numbers and from a different cultural background who are nevertheless already citizens of the United States. Since their first days on the mainland, Puerto Ricans have tended to maintain closer than usual contact with their island communities of origin. They have accomplished this through a complex pattern of migration and reverse migration. The contact flow between the island and the mainland and the reverse migration yield a uniquely Puerto Rican transculturation, involving both adaptive and re-adaptive processes (Comas-Díaz, 1987).

This circular migration means that the island population and mainland community are two parts of one whole, a situation which distinguishes Puerto Ricans from other Hispanic American subgroups and other minority groups. An effect of this circular migration is that elements of both cultures thrive in both places, a feat which requires dual functional abilities. Students in this subculture must be able to switch language and school systems and must cope with competing value systems. Constant transition from one culture to another has produced a condition of marginality that is stressful and often conducive to mental breakdown (Badillo-Ghali, 1974). On the other hand, this persistence of ethnic distinctiveness, despite massive pressure to conform to the homogeneous consumer culture, has been interpreted by some authors as a form of protest (i.e., Nelson and Tienda, 1985).

The specialized literature has identified several cultural descriptors as unique to the Puerto Rican case. Of these, the Puerto Rican language/culture continuum has received the most attention. Flores (1981) in his East Harlem study explained the concept of a Puerto Rican language spectrum as characterized by a bilingual range with a colonial dialect at each of the two poles. The Puerto Rican Spanish pole, with its admixture of indigenous, African, and peasant qualities, is stigmatized to this day as a corruption of the pure mother tongue and other, supposedly more faithful, Latin American variants. The other pole represents the acquired language, a blend of the urban varieties of American English most immediately accessible to Puerto Ricans. This may also be seen by the majority society as a downgraded dialect, distinct from, but sharing much with "black English." In cities with large African American communities, Latino students tend to incorporate a good deal of the African American urban dialect and other cultural identifiers seen by such students as "American" (Marsiglia, 1992).

Most Puerto Ricans in mainland U.S.A. are not located at either of these two poles, but fall somewhere between them. The resulting phenomenon is the interpenetrating usage of both languages - derogatorily called "Spanglish" - in a wide range of circumstances. It is especially useful for in-group communication. The East Harlem study concluded that a highly adaptive phenomenon referred to as code-switching represents neither the lack of language nor structural convergence. Rather, it often signals an expansion of communicative and expressive potential. The presence of "loan" words was identified as the most visible aspect of language contact, and it was explained as part of every kind of contact between cultures.

Harding and Riley (1986) explained code-switching as a phenomenon which is limited to bilingual situations, where bilinguals talk to other bilinguals and where they can call upon the full communicative resources of both languages. It is always meaningful to the bilinguals. However, to the outsider, especially someone who does not speak both languages in question, code switching seems confused and confusing. It is difficult to believe that not only does it follow a set of clear and detailed rules, but that it provides the bilingual with a means of communication possessing great expressiveness.

The two most common forms of code-switching are: Language Choice, when a speaker changes from English to Spanish according to the person s/he is speaking to; and Borrowing, when a word or expression from one language is used in the other, in a "naturalized" form. That is, it is made to conform to the rules or the grammar of the other language. Linguists suggest that bilingual students may see switching as a marker of "solidarity" with the person to whom they are talking.

Over half of the population of the world is bilingual (Harding & Riley, 1986). This is a fact that American educators tend to forget. In the United States, bilingual is mistakenly used as another term for English as a second language. Under the predominant American model, students are rushed as quickly as possible into English. Their first language becomes their second and ultimately disappears.

Van Overbeke (1972) defines bilingualism as an optional or obligatory means for efficient two-way communication between two or more different "worlds" using two different linguistic systems. "Folk bilingualism" results from the conditions of ethnic groups within a single state who have become bilingual involuntarily in order to survive (Tosi, 1982). Usually folk bilingualism is foisted upon a group by an education system which is controlled by others. The opposite case is the so called "elitist bilingualism", where the group uses the education system they control to seek bilingualism (i.e. Russian old aristocracy speaking French; Argentinean higher classes speaking English). In the Puerto Rican case, we may say that their bilingualism is very much obligatory, or in linguistic terms is a form of "folk bilingualism," a term which itself unfortunately has negative connotations to the monolingual American ear.

Theoretical Approximation to the Problem

American post-secondary educators (products of a monolingual educational system) face the challenge of recognizing bilingual Puerto Rican/Latino students as linguistically competent students. In a Chomskian sense, it means that all individuals are biologically endowed with the faculty of language (Chomsky, 1968). The "surface structure" of the students' speech may be labeled at times as Puerto Rican Spanish, black English, Spanglish, or standard English. However, the "deep structure" of their speech reflects the substantive and formal universality of language. Integrating multiculturalism and valuing bilingualism in the classroom will assist educators to work with the two structures of the students' speech and become more effective in reaching out to the Latino student.

Post-secondary institutions have a very important role to play as agents of assimilation of minority students into the mainstream society and its benefits. Assimilation, however, is understood here as a dynamic process rooted in the student's unique historical processes and cultures (Lev Vygostky, 1979). Services and programs designed to meet the needs of Puerto Rican/Latino students should provide a space where students are able to combine their spontaneous concepts -those based on cultural and social practices - with those introduced by teachers in the instructional setting (Paulo Freire, 1979). Students who find their culture and learning styles reflected in both the substance and the organization

of the instructional program are more likely to be motivated and to benefit from their learning experience (Kuykendall, 1992).

Traditional ESL Programs

English as a Second Language (ESL) teaching in the United States has traditionally been based on the described "assimilationist" model. That is to say, the acquisition of English is the key to access the benefits of mainstream American society (McKay, 1988). Students are therefore to be assimilated into the majority culture as rapidly and as completely as possible. ESL is often taught with no support from the first language and with no regard for the student's native culture. This has been particularly true at the college level, where the aim has usually been to move the students into an academic program in English as soon as possible. Because college students often come from a number of linguistic and cultural backgrounds, it is considered expedient to mix them together in a single class where English is the "working language." Some teachers still forbid the use of native languages in such classes. The assimilationist model has been the basis for the ESL curriculum at Cuyahoga Community College since such classes were first offered in the late 1960's.

Flaws in the model only became apparent as the student population of the college began to change over the years as more and more minority students (e.g. Hispanic and Asian) enrolled in ESL. The assimilationist model claims that the process of learning English is the same for all students. It denies historical inequalities that exist among cultural groups. There is no regard for differences in learning styles, socioeconomic background, or minority status. The method is the same for all. Cambodians, Puerto Ricans, Ukrainians and Saudi Arabians are all expected to learn in exactly the same way and even at the same speed. According to N. Clair (1994, p 9), "believing that English is the sole indicator that separates language minority students' ability to successfully enter the American mainstream ignores the social and political reality within which language-minority students exist. It denies the existence of racism and social inequalities that have been historic realities for many immigrant (and migrant) groups."

Studies in bilingualism have clearly shown that first language development supports second language development and that knowledge is transferrable between languages (Ovando and Collier, 1985). It has become evident that bilingualism is both desirable and useful to the student and to society. The "pluralistic" notion of language-learning not only permits the use of the first language, but encourages it as a means to motivate the student. Content is especially important in learning a second language. If the learner perceives the content of a lesson to be relevant, learner motivation will be high (Brinton, 1989). In addition, language must be used for authentic purposes if it is to be learned. Repetitive exercises with little relevance to the students' lives are of little value. From these principles arise the notion of tapping into the students' native culture, and area of natural interest, and using cultural content in order to motivate them to learn English.

In summary, there is a need to: 1. recognize the richness of students' culture; and 2. direct existing "cultural/linguistic tools" towards the full achievement of students'

potential. To address these needs faculty and other staff have to be trained or retrained to become more sensitive to the needs and assets brought to the classroom by Latino students. The college has to provide a "safe" environment, with support services in place that will make Latino students feel welcome and a part of the college community.

II. PROJECT HORIZONTES

Background

In Spring 1992, under the auspices of the College's Hispanic Council, a series of site visits were made to colleges where Latino programs were in place or which had significant Latino enrollments. The purpose of these visits was to become familiar with existing models. Then, during the summer of 1992, a group of Cuyahoga Community College (CCC) E.S.L. teachers started to meet with an external consultant in order to design a pilot project that would help them to better serve the needs of Latino students attending CCC's Metro Campus.

The team operated as a focus group and later as the project design team. During the initial sessions the topics of discussion were centered around Puerto Rican/Latino cultures, students' learning styles, and the status of Puerto Rican/Latino students attending the college. The team concluded that:

"Puerto Rican/Latino students enrolled in Cuyahoga Community College have disproportionately low retention and academic success rates. Their diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds have not been systematically recognized and/or integrated in the past as resources for their academic success. A pervasive lack of recognition of their cultural distinctiveness has had a negative influence on their attitudes towards college education. These students often perceive the College as an uncaring environment where they are not welcome".

The team recommended that a culturally grounded E.S.L. pilot program be designed and implemented in response to the identified needs.

Project Description

Project "Horizontes" (horizons) was designed as a culturally based E.S.L. program to serve the unique needs of the Puerto Rican/Latino students enrolled at the Metropolitan campus of Cuyahoga Community College. Horizontes was intended to provide Latino students enrolled in ESL courses with a culturally relevant support system that would enable them to have an academically challenging and rewarding college entry experience.

Project Purpose: To increase the retention rate of Puerto Rican/Latino students enrolled in Cuyahoga Community College-Metro Campus.

Desired Outcomes:

1. At least 70% of the students enrolled will successfully complete the program and will be enrolled in the following quarter.
2. At least 80% of the students will have a 90% or higher attendance rate.

Approach: Collaborative learning, team-teaching, small class size, peer support, academically challenging, holistic, bilingual/multicultural.

Original design. Students enrolled in Project Horizontes were exposed to the following courses and activities:

- 1) An all-Latino ESL 112 course (12 hrs. per week). The course was team taught by three (3) instructors covering:
 - a) Latino cultural awareness, primarily in Spanish and using short stories in Spanish and English (see Appendix A for syllabus).
 - b) Writing English, taught in English and reinforcing concepts in Spanish (see Appendix B for syllabus).
 - c) College survival, taught solely in English (see Appendix C for syllabus).
- 2) The core group of Latino students was divided in two sub-groups and they were placed with other E.S.L. students in two ESL 111 classes taught by project team members. This intermediate ESL grammar course was taught in English with some limited reinforcement in Spanish.
- 3) Support groups/mentorship. (Meeting every other week.) Each faculty team member served as the facilitator of a student support group. Small groups used English, Spanish, or both languages according to need.
- 4) Social activities, lectures, and luncheon forums. (One activity per month.) All students were invited to participate. In some instances guest speakers were invited. Themes were related to ethnic identity, the college experience, or special celebrations.

TABLE 1 Quarter Completion Rate

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- 5) Biweekly faculty meetings were used to: a) monitor and assess the programmatic aspects of the project; b) coordinate lesson plans under common themes; and c) assess the progress of individual students.

III. ASSESSMENT OF PILOT PHASE: FALL 1992 AND WINTER 1993

The project was successfully implemented during the 1992 Fall quarter and the 1993 Winter quarter. A total of twenty-six students successfully completed the program. Project desired outcomes were attained.

Desired Outcome 1. At least 70% of the students enrolled will successfully complete the program and will be enrolled in the following quarter.

Desired outcome 1 was attained. High percentages of participants completed the program and enrolled in the following quarter/s. See Tables 1 and 2.

TABLE 1 Quarter Completion Rate

	Fall '92	Winter '93	Overall
Started	19	10	29
Dropped	1	2	3
Difference	18	8	26
Retention Rate	(94%)	(80%)	(89%)

As Table 1 illustrates, the project's overall 89% retention rate surpassed the desired outcome by 19 percentage points. Table 2 (below) illustrates the College persistence rate of project participants.

TABLE 2 College Persistence Rate

	Fall '92	Winter '93	Spring '93
1st Cohort	19 (100%)	16 (84%)	12 (63%)
2nd Cohort		10 (100%)	8 (80%)

The high mobility rate that characterized Puerto Rican students lowered the "real" survival rate of the first cohort. Notwithstanding, both student cohorts achieved a college

survival rate well beyond the level established by the desired outcome.

Desired Outcome 2. At least 80% of the students will have a 90% or higher attendance rate.

This desired outcome was attained by project participants as a whole, but it was not attained by the Winter quarter cohort. Table 3 (page 9) illustrates the differences found between the Fall and Winter cohorts.

TABLE 3 Attendance Rate (N=26)

	Total N	N with 90% Attendance	Percent (%)
Fall '92	18	16	88.8
Winter '93	8	5	62.5
Overall	26	21	80.7
Retention Rate	(94%)	(80%)	(89%)

The severity of the weather was identified by faculty members as a determining factor explaining the lower average attendance rate attained by Winter cohort participants. The desired outcome was attained by project participants when both cohort's attendance rates were combined.

Additional Findings

Additional indicators were analyzed to complement the data gathered while assessing the project desired outcomes. These additional indicators included participants' grades, attitudes, and language skills.

Grades. Table 4 (below) presents the average grade point of both participating cohorts of students.

TABLE 4 Grade Point Average (N=26)

	ESL 111	ESL 112	Overall
First Cohort	2.3	2.6	2.5
Second Cohort	1.7	3.2	2.0
Overall	2.1	2.7	2.4

As Table 4 (page 11) illustrates, overall, grade point averages fluctuated within the C range (2 to 2.7 points). In both cohorts over 50% of the students had final grades ranging from C to A.

Language skills. The project incorporated a new multidimensional curriculum, however, the ultimate purpose of E.S.L. courses continued to be to assist students to advance in their English language development. Table 5 (below) presents the results of a pre post test administered to a cohort of participants.

TABLE 5 Language Closed-test Average Scores (N= 18)

	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Difference
Average Scores	10.5	14.0	3.5

A difference of 3.5 points can be interpreted as an important gain in terms of language skills.

Attitudes. A locally constructed scale was used to assess changes in the students' attitude towards college (see Appendix D for a copy of the questionnaire). Students were asked to rate a set of statements written in English and Spanish using a Likert scale (1= strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Questionnaires were administered to the two cohorts during the first week and last week of each quarter (pre-post test). Items rated in reverse were adjusted for the analysis. Table 6 (below) presents the students' average scores for Fall and Winter quarters and an overall cumulative set of average scores.

TABLE 6 Attitudinal Survey Average Scores (N= 26)

	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Difference
First Cohort	3.6	3.7	.1
Second Cohort	3.4	3.4	---
Overall	3.5	3.6	.1

Table 6 illustrates that there were almost no differences between the pre and post-test cumulative scores. The assumption is that Latino students enrolled in the program were motivated and wanted to succeed, as reflected by a 3.5 cumulative average score. It can be surmised that project participation assisted Latino students to maintain a moderately positive initial attitude towards college.

An item analysis identified items d, f, h, and i as the items presenting the greater score differences.

- Item f. "I feel uncomfortable speaking English"
A difference of -.8 can be interpreted as a reflection of the confidence students gained in their ability to communicate in English within a "safe" environment.
- Item h. "I get nervous when participating in class."
The change in attitude mentioned for item f. may also be reflected in the -.4 difference registered for this item.
- Item i. "I feel good when I am with other Hispanics"
A difference of +.5. can be interpreted as a benefit gained from the support received from fellow Latinos. Students developed a true support system among themselves that appeared to have prevented the development of a sense of isolation experienced by other Latino students not enrolled in the project.
- Item d. "Personal problems do not let me advance."
A difference of +.5 may reflect the respondents greater awareness about the relationship between their personal life and their education. The Latino Culture and the College Survival components of the project dealt with this relationship from a cultural specific perspective. This awareness level was followed-up with specific efforts towards attitude and behavior modification. These efforts were intended to help students gain a greater sense of control over their own lives.

IV. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Objectives of the Program were substantially realized.

Retention

The primary purpose of this program was to improve retention of Latino college students. A high 89% overall quarter completion rate was attained during the pilot, as compared with the goal set for a 70% quarter completion rate. College persistence at the Metro Campus of Cuyahoga Community College, as measured by the rate of re-enrollment, was in the 80% range after one quarter and in the 60% range after two quarters as compared with faculty estimates of approximately 20% after two quarters prior to the Horizontes Program. This result was achieved in spite of the fact that it was not possible to follow-up with non re-registering students to find out how many re-enrolled at another branch of CCC, other mainland USA institutions, or - as is known to be true in at least one case - at Puerto Rican institutions of higher education, all of which could fairly be defined as evidence of college persistence.

Learning

There was considerable evidence to indicate that significant learning took place. This includes:

- Self-reports by students that they learned a lot in the way of grammar, writing, vocabulary, and comprehension;
- One faculty report that "These students definitely worked harder in general than most other Hispanic students I have taught at Cuyahoga Community College" and several reports that students supported each other in mastering course content both in and out of class to an unusual degree;
- Pre/Post English Test results, an objective measure of achievement, showed a 33% improvement;
- Grades for the two courses were within the C to A range targeted for the project.

Attitude

Attitude, as measured by the pre post attitude survey, remained constant and reasonably positive throughout the Program. This was interpreted as significant since the previously high drop out rate was accompanied by a good deal of discouragement on the part of many Hispanic students. According to faculty reports, they ended up feeling like they "didn't fit in". Another indication of the attitudes of participants was the high seriousness of purpose reflected in the many comments on feedback sheets requesting more grammar, more writing, more vocabulary, and more emphasis on English, this coming from students who were basically pleased with what they had learned, with the teaching, and with the Program overall, whether or not they expressed appreciation for the Latino Studies component (More on this last point in the "discussion" section below.)

V. DISCUSSION

The impact of the project was clearly positive. Several questions remain about factors contributing to the success of the pilot and adjustments which could further enhance it's effectiveness in the future. Several of these are discussed below.

New Project Design

The most important theoretical assumption underlying the program was that a strong commitment to recognizing, respecting, and enhancing bilingualism would accelerate and reinforce "positive assimilation." This was translated into the design of the program primarily through the bilingual content and the bilingual communication/interaction patterns established in ESL 112, and through bilingual communication in the support groups. Latinos were not punished for or discouraged from speaking Spanish. The level of comfort established is reflected by the fact that some students filled out the course evaluation forms partly in English and partly in Spanish.

On the other hand, several students reported frustration and confusion due to the number of agendas and instructors in English 112. As a result, in Fall '93, a separate Latino Culture course was introduced focussing exclusively on Latino Studies, alongside the other two ESL courses. This course is taught in Spanish. Participants in the program are part of the whole language and culture continuum: Spanish-Latino Culture to English-American culture. The Latino Culture instructor introduces the topic of the week (e.g. Machismo, Fatalism, the Latino family) and the other two instructors use those concepts and materials introduced in the Latino Culture course in their ESL classes. Topics are illustrated by short stories written by young Latin American writers (mostly female and Puerto Rican). A bilingual approach is now being taken in two of the three courses and all three courses are bicultural in content.

It is also clear that the strong support system for Hispanic students developed in the Program contributed substantially to improved retention and academic performance. It is difficult to ascertain the relative importance of respective design elements in the absence of controls. It appears a likely if as yet untested hypothesis that the combination of factors employed produced a better result than any one factor or element might have generated alone.

The college success component was eliminated in Fall '93 because it was seen as too elementary by many students and faculty. Where needed, these issues are to be handled within the context of support groups and in one to one counseling/coaching. In addition, it was felt that the mentorship function could be handled just as effectively (if not more effectively) by students as by faculty, and responsibility for this function has been shifted accordingly.

Extent of Implementation of Theoretical Assumptions

At a deeper level, it is possible to question just how fully the concept of "bilingualism as an expansion of expressive capabilities" has been implemented in the design of the Horizontes Program. While student use of Spanish was corrected in papers and during oral presentations and interaction, would a simultaneous course in the Spanish Language (as contrasted with Latino Culture), have represented a more forceful commitment to enhanced bilingualism? A stronger commitment to enhancing Spanish language fluency would not only further enhance self image, but also further develop competence in the "language of grammar" and the "language of language learning," mentioned by faculty as needing further attention. Involving Latino students as tutors in such classes, as feasible, would also be a possibility.

The importance of this question to our society and not just to the individuals in question may be illustrated if we consider the potential value added to the international business capabilities of the U.S.A. if bilingualism is truly enhanced rather than utilized as a passing phase and then implicitly extinguished through neglect.

e.g. Most Russian immigrants no longer speak Russian. However, a number of families remaining active in the Russian Orthodox Church kept language fluency alive. These people, today, are playing leadership roles in establishing business ties with the new republics of the former Soviet Union.

The "Adjustment Variable"

Generally speaking, there appeared to be two sorts of responses to the design of the program, depending on the amount of time students had been living in mainland U.S. A. prior to enrollment. Those new to the mainland tended to appreciate the portion of the program dealing with the study of Latino Culture more than those who had been here for a longer period of time. This observation needs to be tested and further interpreted, and design implications need to be considered.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is strongly recommended that the assumptions of this Program be shared through faculty briefings with faculty throughout Cuyahoga Community College. Instructors in all subject areas need to reconsider value judgements based on less favorable views of bilingualism, and to consider ways to integrate this new understanding into their work with Latino students.

Unconditional support is needed from the administration for this program to continue and succeed. Bureaucratic barriers are often in the way of innovation. The whole climate and attitude of the college personnel need to be improved. Non-motivated and non-cooperative staff members providing registration, financial aid, counseling, and information services develop into effective gate-keepers. Latinos and all language minority students have the right to access the existing resources and opportunities. As an urban community college CCC must keep its gates wide open. Bilingual and bicultural

tural staff are needed. All staff will benefit from retraining and continuing education.

Although recruitment is vital, the Horizontes experience teaches that retention is the key issue. Innovation must be encouraged, support systems are needed which respond to the special needs of the population that attends CCC. The great majority of the Latinos enrolled are female and mothers. This fact cannot be ignored.

The Horizontes program design can be replicated with other cultural groups in the college. Much of what have been learned can be transferred and adapted to serve the needs of other cultural groups.

Gender is another important variable for further consideration. Much of the literature used in the Latino Culture course and the topics selected aim to empower women. There is a clear feminist approach underlining the curriculum. Perhaps working class women of different ethnic backgrounds may benefit from a Horizontes-like program as they enter college.

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APPENDIX

CUYAHOGA COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Program Horizontes - Latino Culture Component
Winter Quarter, 1993

Syllabus

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading/Activity</u>
01-11	Latin America	PC Globe (educational software)
01-25	Familismo	Una semana de siete días
02-01	Machismo Marianismo	Flor de Cocuyo
02-08	Fatalismo	La muñeca menor
02-15	Personalismo	Recetario de Incautos
02-22	Race and Ethnicity	Otra Maldad de Pateco
03-01	Dominicans and Peruvians	Selected readings
03-08	The Puerto Ricans	Silent Dancing
03-15	The Puerto Ricans	Silent Dancing

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- García Ramis, Magali. *Una semana de siete días* (pp. 111-118)
- _____ *Flor de Cocuyo* (pp. 119-128)
- Ferré, Rosario. *La muñeca menor* (pp. 145-151)
- Lugo, Filippi, Carmen. *Recetario de incautos* (pp. 271-275)
- Vega, Ana Lydia. *Otra maldad de Pateco* (pp. 292-300)

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